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Police Say Captured Panther Weapons Were Not Checked for Fingerprints

By JOHN KIFNER

Special to The New York Times

CHICAGO, Jan. 8—The police sergeant who led a predawn raid in which two Black Panthers were slain told a special coroner's jury today that the police had not checked for fingerprints any of the weapons they said they had seized in the raid.

The police have contended that when they raided a West Side apartment at 4:40 A.M. on Dec. 4, a woman in the apartment opened fire on them with a shotgun, touching off a fierce 10-minute gun fight.

During the raid, Fred Hampton, the Illinois chairman of the Black Panther party and Mark Clark, a Panther leader from Peoria, were shot to death. The Panthers have charged that the police came in shooting and that Mr. Hampton was "murdered in his bed."

The seven Panthers who survived the raid—four of whom were wounded—have been charged with attempted murder of the policemen.

The six-man blue ribbon

coroner's jury named to look into the two Panthers' deaths, took a brief tour of the cramped five-room apartment at 2337 West Monroe Street during the inquest's luncheon recess.

Clusters of Bullet Holes

Previous inspections of the apartment by reporters have found clusters of bullet holes in the places where the dead and wounded Panthers were found, but no bullet holes around the entrance doors or other areas where the police said they were.

The three police witnesses who have testified at the inquest so far have spoken of a smooth, round hole, about an inch in diameter, in the living room door, which they said they believed had been made by a solid deer-hunting slug allegedly fired at them. The slug has not been recovered.

Just before the recess, the jurors were shown the 19 weapons and packets of ammunition the police said they seized in the raid. Among them were a carbine, a half-dozen

handguns and shotguns. One of the shotguns was sawed off, and another, the police said, had been stolen from the Police Department.

During the afternoon session, Sgt. Daniel R. Groth, who commanded the raiding party of policemen attached to the state's attorney's office, was asked if fingerprints had been taken from the weapons.

"I don't believe anybody checked for them," he said.

Special Deputy Coroner Mar-

tin S. Gerber asked why this had not been done by the crime laboratory technicians.

No 'Logical Explanation'

"I answer you very frankly, I don't know what their techniques are," Sergeant Groth replied, although he suggested that any prints might have been "contaminated by so many people handling them."

Mr. Gerber persisted, asking

if there was a "logical explanation" of why no attempts had been made to check the fingerprints.

"No," Sergeant Groth replied.

Under examination by Francis Andrew, a lawyer for the Hampton family, he said that his duties consisted of "investigative work with youth street gangs and answering calls for help from the colored community."

In describing the calls for

help, he said: "a parent will call here. The child is being intimidated by a youth gang, or a businessman will say he has asked to pay extortion."

The state attorney's office and the state intelligence unit of the police force have been mounting a campaign against youth gangs, many of which have been moving into radical politics.

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